THE BUDDHIST SOCIETY OF W.A. (INC)

NEWSLETTER

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BEGINNING OF THE RAINS RETREAT
BODHINYANA MONASTERY
SUNDAY 8TH JULY 1990

During the Lord Buddha’s time a rule was laid down for all monks and nuns directing that they should spend the three lunar months of the rainy season in one place, either in a monastery or alone in a suitable place. This is a period when external work is kept to a minimum and the emphasis is placed on developing peace and wisdom. Quiet surroundings, good Dhamma friends and many hours of meditation provide wonderful supports for this noble goal. The monastic Rains Retreat begins the day after the full moon of July. This full moon is Asalha Puja which commemorates the start of the Buddha’s Teaching career for it was on that day that He gave His first sermon to the five disciples. On Sunday 8th July we will celebrate both Asalha Puja and the “Beginning of the Rains Retreat” at Bodhinyana Monastery.

The programme for this day will include:

9.30 am  
Gathering at the Monastery.

10.00  
Taking the Three Refuges, the Five Precepts, Auspicious chanting and a short Dhamma talk.

10.30  
Offering of dana to the Sangha.

11.00  
Sharing a meal.

12.30  
Offering of requisites to the Sangha.

2.00-4.00pm  
Meditation and Dhamma talk.
"Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammasambuddhassa"

Dear Friends,

In the last newsletter I wrote about how one becomes a Buddhist. Now the obvious follow up question must be “Having taken refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha how should I endeavour to train myself?” In answer to this question Ven Thich Nhat Hanh’s translation of the Buddha’s Discourse on Metta offers some very beautiful guide-lines:

One or she who wants to attain peace should practise being upright, humble, and capable of using loving speech. He or she will know how to live simply and happily, with senses calmed, without being covetous and carried away by the emotions of the majority. Let he or she not do anything that will be disapproved by the wise.

And this is what he or she contemplates:

May everyone be happy and safe, and may their hearts be filled with joy.

May all living beings live in security and in peace — beings who are frail or strong, tall or short, big or small, visible, near or far away, already born or yet to be born. May all of them dwell in perfect tranquillity.

Let no one do harm to anyone. Let no one put the life of anyone in danger. Let no one, out of anger or ill will, wish anyone any harm.

Just as a mother loves and protects her only child at the risk of her own life, we should cultivate Boundless Love to offer to all living beings in the entire cosmos. We should let our boundless love pervade the whole verse, above, below and across. Our love will know no obstacles, our heart will be absolutely free from hatred and enmity. Whether standing or walking, sitting or lying, as long as we are awake, we should maintain this mindfulness of love in our own heart. This is the noblest way of living.

Free from wrong views, greed and desires of the senses, living in beauty and realizing Perfect Understanding, those who practise Boundless Love will certainly transcend Birth and Death.”

Of course this is a high ideal which we may find difficult to live up to at times. However as long as we are moving in that direction we will be heeding our Teacher’s instructions.

With Metta,
Jagaro Bhikkhu.
IDENTITY OF BUDDHISM

Taken from a lecture given by Phra Tepveti at the Buddhist Knowledge Exchange Programme in Bangkok, Thailand.

Religions that people profess vary greatly and number many. Some of these religions are what we call great religions and Buddhism is one among them. Again, in Buddhism, there are many sects and schools which are all different.

This being the case, one might ask: What makes Buddhism Buddhism, not some other religion, and, at the same time, makes all the sects and schools of Buddhism recognizable as Buddhism in spite of all the differences in forms and principles?

The Buddha once said, “Just as the great ocean has only one taste, that is, the taste of salt, even so this Dhamma-Vinaya (Buddhism) has only one taste, the taste of freedom.” He also said, “All dhammas have the essence of freedom (Vimutti).”

A man is born half-free and half-dependent. As a social being, he is dependent for his survival on other people beginning with his parents right from the time of his birth. Naturally, he depends for his subsistence on his natural surroundings and requisites of life. Mentally, he depends to a large extent on his former generation for the passing on of knowledge and skill, for guidance and information. Beyond a limit, however, he is free to think and choose. In other words, he has a potentiality of freedom. If rightly guided and allowed opportunity, a man will tread a way out of dependence into the state of freedom. He is free to shape his life, to lead a choice way of life, and, finally, to live and taste freedom. In another way of speaking, he is born relatively unfree, but he is born to be free. On the contrary, under misguidance, domineering influence and indoctrination, dependence will lead only to complete dependence or spiritual subjugation and subordination.

In primitive and older religions, people surrender themselves to the gods, praying and calling upon them to give them protection and to grant them their wishes. They put their trust in the gods for their safety and prosperity, for exemption from punishment and the bestowing of rewards. They put their lives under absolute dependence on the gods. In many highly developed religions, the adherents believe in the omnipotence of a single god who created all things and designs or decides the destinies of all beings. The followers of some of these religions seek, through absolute faith and trust in this all-powerful Being, salvation in the sense of being
rescued from sin into heaven, while in other religions the believers make all efforts to gain a union with the Supreme Being or to become one with the Absolute. In a sense, they try to free themselves from dependence on or subjection to the mundane state only in order to be absorbed into or annexed to a so-called transcendental one. Formerly they were part of the evil or undesirable existence, and now, having delivered themselves from that condition, they turn to become part of a craved existence. It is a kind of release from a relative dependence in order to achieve a final and absolute bondage or subjection.

The Buddhist system of spiritual training, a practitioner in his early stages of the training has a belief and confidence, based on understanding, in the Master and his teachings, a kind of dependency. Under right guidance or, in the words of a strict sense, by treading the way of self-training shown by the Master; he develops his own wisdom and finally comes to realize the Truth for himself. Then, he becomes a really free man, externally independent of the Master and internally enjoying absolute freedom. While, in other religions, the goal of religious life is increased dependence and to be united, the goal of Buddhism is decreased dependence and finally to be absolutely free.

Just as the goals differ, so the means are different. In most of the religions, salvation can be achieved through faith in the Supreme Being. A union with God or ultimate reality is realized in a state of deep trance as a mystical experience. Samadhi or meditation (contemplation or concentration) is often prescribed as the means to gain this mystical experience. In Buddhism, faith and meditation are not decisive factors for the realization of its final goal. But it is knowledge or wisdom that is the decisive factor of the Enlightenment.

Faith is really a significant virtue. But its real value is only as a basis for the development of knowledge or wisdom. It is a kind of dependence on another or other persons. It is a stage in the process of self-training when one has not realized the Truth for oneself and, thus, has to depend on the Master or teacher for further knowledge. Once insight into the Truth has been achieved, faith is transcended. The perfected person is beyond faith. He is independent of faith and lives a life of knowledge or wisdom.

Samadhi or meditation (more strictly rendered as concentration) is an indispensable factor for the achievement of mystical experience. However, it does not mean that samadhi alone is sufficient for the attainment of the final goal of Buddhism. In the Buddhist practice, the real value of Samadhi lies in its function to make the mind wieldy and ready for the application and working out of knowledge or wisdom to realize the
goal of freedom. Without the awareness of this value and the real purpose, Samadhi may lead one astray.

Rightly using Samadhi as the basis for the development of knowledge or wisdom, the practitioner will gradually come to gain for himself an insight into the true nature of things. This is the true path to the goal of Buddhism. It is the path of mental training and development. Two parts or aspects of the development have been distinguished, namely, the development of Samadhi or, in Pali ‘Samatha-Bhavana’, and the development of insight which is called in Pali ‘Vipassana-Bhavana’. Samatha or Samadhi can be found in many religious systems, but Vipassana, the decisive aspect of development for the realization of the final goal, is peculiar to Buddhism. All sects and schools of Buddhism must have this identical means to secure their Buddhist goal.

Through Vipassana or insight, one sees things as they really are. One realizes that all conditioned things are impermanent and subject to stress and conflict and that all things, whether conditioned or unconditioned, are not self. These are the three characteristics of existence which show the true nature of all things. The third and last of these characteristics is what is called the state of Anatta. It is not something to be realized with just Samadhi or any mystical experience, but with penetrating knowledge of Vipassana. The insight into Anatta or the impersonality of all phenomena frees the mind of all attachments. As it unveils the ultimate reality of existence and leads on to non-attachment and the final freedom, it is a central tenet of Buddhism. This doctrine of Anatta or not-self is also peculiar to the Buddha’s teachings and it is an identity of Buddhism.

Thus, what is the identity of Buddhism is also its unity and uniqueness.
PAPANCA (Mental Proliferation)

The most difficult thing in existence is mind uncontrolled,
Once in motion, difficult to stop.
Through seeing and understanding Papanca,
Mind is set free from perpetual wanderings.

The Buddha once described the human body as being like a lump of froth, all feelings like water bubbles, perceptions as having a mirage-like quality, the varieties of thoughts and formations are like a plantain tree, and consciousness like a magical trick.

What’s the case, and our minds and bodies do have these qualities, then what’s the problem with human existence? In reality, there is no problem at all. Human life should be a peaceful experience. But there is an interference, and it is called papanca. Also, we all have desires which usually incline towards pleasure and gain. But desire cannot get what it wants unaided, so it makes a friend of papanca, and together, hand in hand, they create lots of misery in the search for satisfaction. This papanca does not have a conscience, it will do as it’s trained to do. Its function is to create, make something out of nothing, and perpetuate existence like a machine.

This tendency to distort turns mere liking into obsession and infatuation, and mere disliking into anger and hatred, as well as distorting the reality of ordinary situations. We can acknowledge this by looking at our own minds, and for most of us, the thinking faculty is turned on virtually all the time. That continuous chattering and commenting gives us no respite. We may see that over a long period of time, the reactive, conceptual mind has gained much strength, and is now a formidable force. It thus seems futile and hopeless to do anything about our mental condition.

We should remember that the Buddha himself once had mind states similar to our own. He went right ahead, confronted his mind, and discovered for himself an effective way out of tiring.

We can deal with papanca, this obsessive proliferating tendency, by simply watching it. Observing how, when a thought arises, it turns into thinking through our attaching to it. As we observe this process, we simultaneously stop feeding it with energy, and eventually the obsessive thinking will stop. It will burn itself out through lack of fuel. Being alert and aware we can detach immediately whenever we see papanca’s initial movements around an object, thus cutting short the proliferating process. Practising in this way, we can experience a gradual, and sometimes sudden, diminishing of conceptual activity in the mind, to the point where thoughts are seen like passing clouds or bubbles against the background of the clear space of the mind.

Ven. Nyanadassi
The Sangha of Bodhinyana Monastery.
SANGHA NEWS

Some weeks ago, when Ajahn Jagaro was away in Victoria and, here, one problem seemed to rise up after another, I gained much solace from the following proverb:-

"Blessed are they who never expect anything, for they will never be disappointed"

Just like a good proverb should, it first made me laugh, then made me reflect on such a vital nugget of wisdom and, thereafter, it was easily remembered. Not only is the saying ‘unexpectedly’ profound but, moreover, it is very useful in our daily lives, including that of the Sangha. I have discovered that much of monastic life is learning not to expect anything, or, to put it another way, to expect the unexpected. Even so, my experience demands that a further phrase be added to complete the saying:- “…and they are often pleasantly surprised!”

When I journeyed to Thailand to become a monk, I never expected that I would eventually come to reside in Australia - it has been a pleasant surprise ‘living in this open, frank and friendly, energetic society. When I joined a forest monastery, I never expected to be giving talks in schools and prisons, blessing marriages and conducting funerals - that too has been a pleasant surprise because one learns a great deal when teaching others. When I began to develop meditation, I never expected to spend much time building - yet another pleasant surprise for it has kept me fit and also aroused more mindfulness, energy and faith. And when I came here to Perth to assist Ajahn Jagaro, I never expected to have to write newsletter articles - well not everything is a pleasant surprise!

Also, I never expected that the Sangha would be travelling so much. Ajahn Jagaro has only recently (at the time of scribbling this piece) returned from a successful three week teaching tour of Canberra, Hobart and Melbourne. In early May, I spent a busy but pleasant week in Darwin giving public talks, leading a short meditation retreat and, the main reason for going, conducting the Vesak ceremony for the large monk-less Buddhist community up there (some two or three hundred attended the ceremony including the Northern Territory’s chief administrator, His Honour James Muirhead, and also a T.V. crew from the popular ‘Four Corners’ programme). Unlike Perth, many of Australia’s cities do not have resident English-speaking teaching monks and so they often look to us for help. So much so that I can envisage, one day in the future, maybe, a service similar to Australia’s famous Flying Doctor - the Flying monk Service! Then we could say that Buddhism has really taken off in Australia!
Ajahn Jagaro is off to Thailand for three weeks, a trip which is not so much a holiday but more of a 'business trip' teaching Dhamma (he is a very popular and famous speaker in Thailand) and keeping contact with our parent monasteries. Accompanying Ajahn Jagaro, will be Ven Sudhammo who will remain in Thailand for the Rains Retreat. He will stay at Wat Pah Nanachat, the beautiful branch monastery of Ajahn Chah where many of his western disciples have trained. The idea is to give junior monks a taste of the Buddhist tradition in a country which is as steeped in Buddhist culture as Australia is drenched in sunshine. After the rains Retreat, Ven Sudhammo will be returning to Bodhinyana probably in early November, thus leaving behind the monsoon swelled hordes of blood thirsty Thai mosquitoes for the even more numerous swarm of Aussie flies, a case of 'out of the frying pan and into the fliers!' (Actually, neither the Thai mosquitoes nor the Australian flies are that bad.)

Sometime after the Rains Retreat also, we are expecting (!) a young Cambodian monk, Ven Sreng Lay Hout, to arrive in Perth from one of the refugee camps in Thailand. In conjunction with the Khmer Association of W.A., we have sponsored this four rains-old monk for permanent residence in Australia. Hopefully, this dedicated young Khmer monk will find Bodhinyana Monastery a much more conducive environment for meditation and study than the refugee camp and will eventually become a great asset, not just to the Khmer Buddhists in Perth but to the Buddhist community as a whole.

Before I became a monk I used to earn my brown rice as a high school teacher in England. Fellow teachers, with unruly children, who are already tearing their hair out in despair, can easily see what led to my becoming a monk! So the last thing I expected was to be in a classroom again before a blackboard teaching kids. But the Sangha here do receive many invitations to talk on Buddhism in schools. This last few months senior monks have taught in delightful primary schools such as the one in Roleystone, to grand secondary colleges like Penrhos in Bentley. We’ve even been to very posh schools like Presbyterian Ladies College in Peppermint Grove, the sort of joint where even I have to make sure that my robe is impeccably rolled. On the whole, the children from grade 3 to grade 12 are very interested and I sense that there may be some future nun-material in some of these expensive private girls’ schools – maybe one day we will have our own hairless heiress! Because of all these comings and goings our building projects have not proceeded as fast as expected, which is to be expected! In our previous newsletter I wrote that we were putting the final touches on our new workshop. Well now we are putting the final final touches on it...next month the final, final, final touches, you know how some of these jobs go on. First you put up some shelves, then some more shelves for the shelving materials, then shelves
for shelves for shelves... That is why we have a Rains Retreat - to put a stop to all that proliferation, to shelve it all! An accommodation block for elderly visitors is well underway and should be mostly finished by the start of the Rains Retreat. It will be wonderful to have a facility where the elderly and those not so physically strong can come to stay at the monastery and benefit from its serenity. This is the first structure we have put completely in the hands of a builder but, nevertheless, I still need to keep an eye out for the unexpected. For example, I spotted that the bricklayers had muddied the windows and had already half bricked in a pair of clear-glazed view windows in the room which would be the toilet! If I hadn’t noticed, the elderly would have had to suffer a 'oo with a view. Now they have replaced the windows for frosted glass ones. The other 'building project' current at Bodhinyanya and which has being going on since we first arrived and will never finish is 'building-up' the forest. Fortunately, the trees, shrubs and other small plants do most of the work themselves. We just add a little water, a bit of fertilizer and clear away the dead stuff. I have often fantasized on how wonderful it would be if erecting structures were as easy, if we could have an 'instant house' powder - just add water, wait, and there's your house. It reminds me of a story I read about an elderly man who had migrated to the West from Eastern Europe; on his first trip to a supermarket he couldn't believe the extent of all the foodstuffs available and he was amazed at western technology: You could buy powder, add water and you had orange juice; on another shelf was milk powder - just add hot water; on another shelf was instant mashed potato powder, but what really stopped him in his tracks was when he saw the shelf containing 'baby powder'! Back to Sangha News, though Sister Rocana has gone, the gardens around the main hall and kitchen block are still being looked after with loving care by a volunteer who is doing much much more than merely adding water. The gardens now look great, thanks Pauline.

Ajahn Jagaro is expected back from Thailand just before the start of the Rains Retreat and, despite the proverb at the beginning of this article, we do await his return. The whole Sangha works diligently to establish this Buddhist tradition here in Western Australia and when one is away it increases the burden on the others. But the Rains Retreat is the time when the Sangha stops travelling, when the Flying Monk Service is grounded, and when external work gives way to the inner work of meditation. May our expectation of a quiet retreat not be disappointed!

Ven Brahm.
VINAYA

This is the seventh article in the series about VINAYA, the body of monastic rules and traditions binding on every Buddhist monk and nun. In the previous newsletter I wrote on WHAT a monk or nun may eat; in this present article I will discuss WHEN and WHY they should eat:

THE TIME AND PLACE FOR EATING

For a monastic (a monk or a nun) food is to be regarded as medicine and not as a pleasure. In the spirit of the Middle Way it should be taken in just sufficient quantity to keep the body healthy. In the KITAGIRI SUTTA of the MAJHIMA NIKAYA is found the following passage:

“Once when the Buddha was touring in the region of Kasi together with a large Sangha of monks he addressed them saying: “I, monks, do not eat a meal in the evening. Not eating a meal in the evening I, monks, am aware of good health and of being without illness and of buoyancy and strength and living in comfort. Come, do you too, monks, not eat a meal in the evening. Not eating a meal in the evening you too, monks, will be aware of good health and....and living in comfort.”

Consequently, eating only in the period from dawn until noon became the tradition for Buddhist monastics, but not without some resistance at first. In the LATUKIKOPAMA SUTTA, also of the MAJHIMA NIKAYA, Venerable Udayin spoke thus to the Buddha:

“We, revered sir, used to eat in the evening and in the morning and in the afternoon. Revered sir, the Lord at that time addressed the monks saying: Please do you, monks, give up eating at this wrong time during the afternoon’. I was depressed because of this, revered sir, I was sorry and thought ‘The Lord speaks of our giving up that sumptuous food which faithful laypeople give us in the afternoon and of our rejecting it’.

Then we used to eat (just) in the morning and in the evening. It was at this time that the Lord addressed the monks saying: ‘Please do you, monks, give up eating in the evening’. I was depressed because of this, revered sir, I was sorry and thought ‘The Lord speaks of our giving up that which is reckoned as the more sumptuous of these two meals and of our rejecting it’.”
But Venerable Udayin, who, by the way, was known for being fat, soon got over his disappointment and realized the benefits of restraint in eating. Moreover, he appreciated that as monks obtain their food mainly on almsround, going out for almsfood in the evening had certain disadvantages. The same sutta continues:

"Once, revered sir, when monks were walking for almsfood in the dense darkness of the night, they would walk into a pond at the village entrance, or they would stumble into the village cesspool, or they would blunder into a thorny hedge or stumble into a sleeping cow, and they would meet young men up to no good and wanton women. Once, revered sir, I walked for almsfood in the dense darkness of the night and a certain woman saw me during a lightening flash as she was washing a bowl and, terrified at seeing me she uttered a scream of horror: 'How terrible for me, indeed there is a demon after me'. This said, I, revered sir, said to this woman: 'Sister, I am no demon, I am a monk standing for almsfood'. She said 'The monks father must be dead, the monks mother must be dead! It were better for you, monk, to have your stomach cut out with a sharp butchers knife than to walk for almsfood for the sake of your belly in the dense darkness of the night.'"

A monk or nun who eats food outside of the proper time, from dawn until noon, commits an offence called PACITTIYA. To free themselves of the offence they have to approach a fellow monk or nun and tell them of their misdeed. This simple acknowledgement is all that is required for it serves to heighten one’s sense of duty, and of responsibility, and so it is a strong incentive to be more punctilious in the future. Thus these rules of Vinaya do not rely on punishment but rather urging greater mindfulness and restraint so that the same mistake will not be repeated.

Though solid foods are disallowed outside of the morning period, other substances were allowed in the afternoon or evening, especially where there is a need such as sickness. Strained fruit and vegetable juices are allowable in the afternoon, especially for thirsty monks and nuns. Then the five traditional Indian ‘medicines’ of ghee, oil, butter/cheese, honey and sugar were allowed in the afternoon as a ‘tonic’, to be used for such reasons as when a monk or nun had been working hard, when it was very cold, or when they had received insufficient almsfood that morning. Clear meat or bean broths are allowed in the afternoon for very sick monks or nuns. Drinks like tea, herbal infusions, ginger, cocoa and coffee are also allowable in the afternoon as much as a monk or nun requires. Milk, however, is the subject of some controversy. Some monks say it is allowable in the afternoon, some say it isn’t and our tradition says it ‘aint.
Whatever is allowable and what is not and when, a good monk or nun always remembers the WHY of eating. The following verses of the Buddha are to be reflected upon whenever taking nourishment and they are heard recited at Bodhinyana before every meal by one of the monks:

"Wisely reflecting we use this almsfood, not for fun, not for pleasure, not for fattening and not for beautification. But only for the maintenance and nourishment of this body, for keeping it healthy, for helping with the holy life, thinking thus: I will allay hunger without overeating, so that I may continue to live blamelessly and at ease."

Ven. Brahm

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Offering Dana on Poson Day.
GUIDELINES TO SUTTA STUDY

‘From the BPS Newsletter; courtesy of Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, Sri Lanka.’

The Ariyapariyesana Sutta, The Discourse on the Noble Quest (Majjhima Nikaya No. 26; WHEEL No. 198), is at once a personal narrative by the Buddha of his own quest for enlightenment and a compendium of guide-lines for those who seek to follow in his footsteps. The sutta opens with the venerable Ananda requesting the Buddha to call on some monks staying in a nearby hermitage in order to give them a talk on the Dhamma. When the Buddha arrives at the hermitage, he finds the monks engaged in a Dhamma discussion and commends them with his well-known word of counsel: "When you are gathered together you should either talk about the Dhamma or maintain noble silence."

Thereupon the Buddha begins the discourse proper by pointing out that there are two kinds of quest, the noble quest and the ignoble quest. The word “quest” as used in this context signifies more than just an attempt to achieve a particular goal. It refers rather to the fundamental values which give meaning and purpose to our lives, to our choice of guiding ideals and the endeavour to actualize them. It is fitting that the Buddha introduce the distinction between the two kinds of quest at the very outset of his discourse; for the search for enlightenment, which he is about to relate to the monks, acquires fullness of meaning only when understood against the background of its underlying motivation, and the distinction drives home the need to clarify one’s reasons for seeking enlightenment before entering upon the quest for it.

The ignoble quest is the life orientation of the worldling, whose thoughts and deeds are rivetted by attachment. Being himself subject to birth, ageing and death, he seeks only objects of enjoyment that are also subject to birth, ageing and death. Fettered by ignorance and craving, he can neither discern the flaws in his mundane concerns nor envisage any higher goal worthy of his attention.

The noble quest, in contrast, is the endeavour to break free from the repetitive round of craving, enjoyment and suffering. This quest begins when we discover the dangers hidden behind our worldly pleasures - their transience, falsity and insatiability. Such a discovery breaks the spell of our enchantment with the mundane and impels us to seek that which is not subject to decay and death - Nibbana, "the uttermost security from the bonds.”
Having drawn the distinction between the two kinds of quest, the Buddha next relates the story of his own renunciation. He explains that in the past, while he was still a Bodhisatta prior to his enlightenment, he sought worldly pleasures just like any ordinary worldling. But at a certain point he discovered the perils in attachment, and in the prime of life, seeking “the incomparable, matchless path to peace,” he went forth from the home life into homelessness.

The body of the sutta then presents an account of the Buddha’s search for enlightenment. The Buddha describes his apprenticeship under the two eminent meditation masters from whom he learned the methods of serenity meditation, and his disillusionment with their teachings consequent upon his realization that they could not lead him to genuine insight and enlightenment. He sketches - in the delicate, suggestive prose of the Pali suttas - his painful struggle in solitude and his eventual awakening to Nibbana, the goal of the noble quest. There follows the moving account of the Buddha’s decision to teach the Dhamma in the world, and of the inception of his teaching career with the discourse to the five ascetics in the Deer Park at Benares.

Concluding the sutta, the Buddha explains that an earnest seeker who has entered on the noble quest should make use of his material requisites - food, clothing and shelter - with restraint and mindfulness. He should use them only as supports to pass beyond the range of Mara, the Lord of Death, into the perfect freedom of the Deathless.

by Bhikkhu Bodhi

FOR BPS CATALOGUE.

The Buddhist Publication Society of Kandy, Sri Lanka, a specialist publisher of literature on Theravada Buddhism, has issued its new catalogue for 1990 - 1991, Copies of this catalogue are available from the Buddhist Society.

Our bookshop has some of the BPS publications in stock.
COMMITTEE NEWS

Greetings again everyone. Here are some highlights of what has transpired since the last Newsletter.

Grant-in-Aid Worker

I am very pleased to announce that Kanthi de Tissera has been employed as our Grant-In-Aid Worker. (Should any one not know, we have been awarded a grant by the Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs to appointed a qualified person to assist migrants in their adjustment to Australian Society.) Kanthi has a university degree in social work and is well known and respected within our Buddhist community. She has set up her office in our newly acquired house at 14 Nanson Way, telephone number 344 4220 (office hours only). Welcome Kanthi; I wish you all the best in your most worthwhile job!

His Holiness The Dalai Lama’s Proposed Visit

We have learned that HH the Dalai Lama will be visiting Australia in October 1991. A committee of various Buddhist and other interested groups has been set up to try to make it possible for him to come to Perth during his trip. The Society and the Sangha have been forthcoming in support for his visit (both in general terms and materially). Needless to say, a visit by HH the Dalai Lama would be a very special event for all the Buddhist Committees.

A Most Generous Gift

Because of the extreme generosity of a devoted Thai couple, we now have the means to build a separate Dhamma Hall. Plans are currently being discussed, and a general concept type sketch of the proposed new Hall is on display on the back wall of the Vihara. In brief the plans include building the Hall in what is now the car park, extending and renovating the house next door to the Vihara and demolishing the house at 14 Nanson Way to make a new car park. All members are invited to come and view the sketch and to comment on the plans. We are grateful to our exceptionally generous benefactors.

Vietnamese Temple

Another Vietnamese Buddhist temple and community centre is being built by the Vietnamese community north of Perth. One of our members who owns the ‘Siam Kitchen’ restaurant in Fremantle collected the price of
those meals sold during April to Buddhist Society members and others, and donated the sum to the Pho Quang Temple in Marangaroo. A total of $3,000 was donated. May this wonderful effort be a symbol of harmony between the Buddhist groups in Perth and bring happiness to all involved.

Thai Visitors

I wish to express our gratitude to all who helped in April’s visit by a large contingent of Thai Buddhists. These periodic visits continue to reflect the high esteem held in Thailand for the senior members of our Sangha. Thank you all.

Monastic Retreat in August

The 3 month period from the full moon of July to the full moon of October is traditionally the time for the monastic retreat. But for our hard working Sangha it has usually been ‘business as usual’. Last year we tried a compromise and invited the Sangha to remain in the monastery for a complete 4 weeks during August in an uninterrupted retreat. This was so successful that we are doing the same this year. Though, in August, no monks will be teaching on Friday nights or Saturday afternoons in Nollamara, nor on Wednesday evenings at Armadale - alternative speakers have been arranged. The speakers and the subjects are advertised elsewhere in this newsletter. Saturday afternoon meditation will continue and be led by one of our experienced lay meditators - see you there!

Vesakha Day

We celebrated Vesakha Day at the Vihara on May 6th. It was an enjoyable and full day with: Auspicious chanting, taking the 3 refuges and the 5 precepts, a Dhamma talk, food, a slide show of Buddhist holy places in India and finally circumambulation in the park across the street. I wonder what our neighbours thought of all those people walking around in a circle with lighted candles?

Those are some of the highlights since the last Newsletter. As you can see, it has been an eventful period. But then I guess every period is eventful in its own way; isn’t it?

May all Beings be happy and well.

Jay Meddin
(President)
LIBRARY NEWS FROM JAN.

Opening times:  Friday  3.00 - 10.00 pm.  
                 Saturday 2.00 -  5.00 pm.

While the library aims at providing a first class selection of Buddhist books and tapes we have added a small section on Environment and Health realising that the very real problems facing all beings on our planet today and indeed the planet itself as a living system, must be of concern to all thinking, compassionate people who wish to know what they can do about their own lives.

Some of the titles in this section are:

"The Compassionate Universe" - Eknath Easwaran.
"Inventing the Future" - David Suzuki.
"The Eco-Crisis" - Ven Sucitto Bhikkhu.
"Buddha Nature" - Ven Sucitto Bhikkhu.
"Thinking Like A Mountain - Towards a Council of All Beings" - John Seed
"Why You Don’t Need Meat" - Peter Cox.
"Tassajara Cooking" - A Zen Vegetarian Cook Book.  
"Vegetarian Cooking" - Vikki Leng.

Also thoroughly recommended is David Suzuki’s recorded talk on environmental and global issues affecting the ecology (tape no. 571).

SUNDAY 29th JULY
8 PRECEPT DAY & PUJA.

Following the success of Poson Day on the 17th of June when several devout Buddhists observed the 8 Precepts throughout the day, we are arranging another day, on Sunday 29th July during the Rains Retreat, when Buddhists of all nationalities come to Dhammadloka to observe the 8 Precepts, study the Dhamma and practice meditation. There will also be a Puja (a devotional service) in the evening starting promptly at 5.00pm, to which all are invited. For further information, please contact Kanthi De Tissera (344 4220) or speak with one of the monks.
REGULAR ACTIVITIES

DHAMMALOKA BUDDHIST CENTRE,
NOLLAMARA.

FRIDAY  *
7.30-8.00pm  Guided sitting meditation
8.00-9.00pm  A talk on Buddhism by one
             of the senior monks.

SATURDAY  *
9.30am       Food offering to the Sangha.
10.00am      Lohan Kung with John Ross.
3.00-4.00pm  Meditation and discussion

SUNDAY  *
8.30-9.30am  Sitting Meditation.
9.30am       Food offering to the Sangha.

MONDAY
7.30pm       Tai Chi classes  - On-going.
TUESDAY
7.30pm       - Beginners.

THURSDAY
9.30-11am    Yoga and relaxation.

WEDNESDAY AT ARMADALE *
7.00-9.00pm  Meditation and Dhamma talk
             at the Community Health
             Centre, Armadale Kelmscott
             Hospital, Albany Hwy.

* please note - no monks will be coming to Dhammaloka,
    nor to Armadale in August. Please see inside for details.

ADDRESSES

The Buddhist Society of W.A. (Inc)
Dhammaloka Buddhist Centre
18-20 Nanson Way.
Nollamara, 6061.  Tel: 345 1711

Bodhinyana Monastery
Lot 1, Kingsbury Drive
Serpentine, 6205
Tel: 525 2420

Buddhist Community Services
Social Worker,
14 Nanson Way, Nollamara, Tel: 344 4220